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**TAJIKISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Baby Salomat Stays Healthy

**Thanks to USAID, thousands of parents receive better health care for their children.**



Salomat's father Hollov Hushbaht is happy to have qualified medical help for his daughter right in the village.

Photo: Mercy Corps

***To improve children's health across Tajikistan, USAID-funded Child Survival Program has taught hundreds of pediatricians and other doctors from rural health units to diagnose and treat common childhood illnesses according to WHO-recommended strategy.***

Salomat means "Healthy". That's the name of a little girl in Holdorkipchok village of Shahrستان district. After her birth, Salomat was often ill, and her parents frequently took her to the central district hospital because there were no adequate health facilities close to their village. "It took us a long time to reach there, and there was much financial expense," - says Salomat's father Hollov Hushbaht.

Thanks to the USAID-funded Child Survival Program, the situation has now changed, and the village has a trained doctor to help Salomat. Since 2005 the program, implemented by Mercy Corps, is introducing the WHO-recommended strategy for integrated management of childhood illnesses. As part of this strategy, the program teaches doctors in small communities around the country to treat common diseases among children under five years of age. Doctors are taught to diagnose various illnesses and apply evidence-based methods to cure them. To facilitate the introduction, the program organized training centers in central district hospitals and provided them with the necessary equipment and information materials for training sessions. Medical professionals who independently treat children received

9-day training course, where theoretical instruction went hand in hand with practice.

Pediatrician Kurchkarova Kiziloi who works in the Holdorkipchok village ambulatory says: "The received knowledge and skills eased my work many times. Before, I had to send the patients to different specialists to make an appropriate diagnosis, and of course it took a long time. Now I am using my knowledge for diagnosis and am able to prescribe proper medicine for treatment myself. I am really satisfied and happy that I have advanced my medical skills."

The parents in the village are happy too. "When my daughter caught a cold and developed high temperature, the village ambulatory provided primary health care to my Salomat and prescribed appropriate medicine for treatment." - says Hushbaht. His eyes lit up remembering how little Salomat stopped crying when she saw bright toys in doctor's room. "Thanks to the doctor, she is doing better," he says.